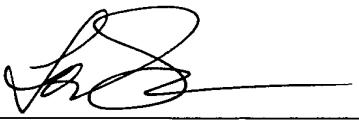


**REMARKS**

This Preliminary Amendment is being filed in order to place the above-captioned application, which is being filed concurrently herewith, in better form for examination. Favorable action on the application is solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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**MARKED-UP VERSION SHOWING CHANGES MADE**

Changes made to paragraph beginning at page 16, line 18:

A photograph is repeatedly taken until the check object person coming in front of the camera 14 presses down the check start button 18, and a plurality of photographs are taken. It is preferable that an upper limit of the number of acquired photographs is fixed, so that a photograph is not unnecessarily taken. When the check object person presses down the check start button 18 (step n5), the CPU 42 acquires an image of the check object person immediately after the press of the check start button 18 (step n6).

Changes made to the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 4:

In the correspondence of the present invention and the constitution of the foregoing embodiment, the photograph means of the present invention corresponds to the camera 14, 32 of the embodiment[, and similarly in the following] or any other equivalent known to those of ordinary skill in the art. Similarly, the photograph object corresponds to the check object person 31, the button for check confirmation corresponds to the check start button 18[,] and the object detection sensor corresponds to the person detection sensor 15[, the]. The memory means corresponds to the memory 43 [or], the registration file 51[, and the] or any other equivalent structure known to those of ordinary skill in the art. The display means corresponds to the check result display LED 16 [and], the check count display LED 17 or any other equivalent structure known to those of ordinary skill in the art. [However, the present invention can be applied on the basis of the technical concept recited in the claims, and is not limited only to the structure of the foregoing embodiment.] It is intended that the specification be considered as exemplary only, with the true scope and spirit of the invention being indicated by the following claims.

2. (Amended) An image comparison method, comprising:

[a step of] detecting existence of a photograph object;

[a step of] capturing a plurality of images of the photograph object in a case where the photograph object is detected;

[a step of] detecting a press of a button for check confirmation;

[a step of] comparing at least one of the plurality of captured images with information concerning previously memorized registration images when the press of the button is detected; and

[a step of] outputting a comparison result.

New claims 17-28 are being added.